



**Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations Rewrite
Suitland Area Civic Association Leaders – April 30, 2015**

This meeting is an opportunity to discuss the proposals presented in the Clarion Associates' Evaluation and Recommendations Report.

How did the County's Zoning Ordinance get so long?

There were many different reasons that contributed to the current length of the Zoning Ordinance. Some of the primary factors include constant text amendments, special exceptions, and a lot of rules that are confusing and difficult to understand.

Does the current Zoning Ordinance require developers to meet with the community prior to submitting an application?

The current Zoning Ordinance does not require developers to meet with the community prior to submitting a development application.

Is it a recommendation that developers meet with the community prior to submitting an application?

The Clarion Associates team proposes that mandatory neighborhood meetings be held for the following types of applications: zoning map amendments, planned development zones (the establishment of a basic plan for future development in this recommended zone), Special Exceptions with over 50 residential units and/or 25,000 square feet of nonresidential development, preliminary plans for major subdivisions, and major site plans. The thresholds between "major" and "minor" will be determined during the rewrite process.

The attendees expressed skepticism moving forward, indicating that in the past many people found ways to circumvent the process. They also indicated a lack of trust at all levels, and frustration at paying taxes but not receiving services.

Having a clearly written, plain English set of zoning and subdivision rules and clear procedures will go a long way toward eliminating opportunities to "cheat" the process. Staff, the Planning Board, and the County can't be held accountable unless the residents can understand the codes and rules.

While the Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations rewrite project does not have any direct impacts on taxes, one reason why the County tax burden falls primarily on residential property owners is that we have very little commercial tax base to speak of. This project could help reduce barriers to non-residential and commercial growth, expanding the commercial tax base and reducing pressure on residential tax payers.



When questioned as to the development the participants liked in the County, they named the new Dollar General store in Suitland, EYA Hyattsville, Largo, and Westphalia. The desire is for nice family restaurants nearby, as well as other amenities. Development that caters to all ages, not just the Millennial generation, is desired—seniors need to feel safe and have an opportunity to age in place.

When will the new Zoning Ordinance take effect and what should people who are interested in developing in our community do until then?

The current timeline of the project estimates that the final approval for the Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations will take place in March 2017 and likely will not take effect until sometime following, to allow for education and a transition phase. Any project that has its approval or is in the development review process on the day the new regulations take effect will be allowed to continue under the prior rules.

Interested residents should visit our webpage at <http://zoningpgc.pgplanning.com> to sign up for project updates and review project materials. You can also register to comment on major documents such as the Evaluation and Recommendations Report and future draft modules of the zoning and subdivision language through OpenComment: <http://pgplanning.opencomment.us>.

Is there a list of current development applications pending approval or currently approved in the Suitland community?

Staff provided a copy of this information shortly after the community discussion.